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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

MANY OF OUR readers probably watched with great interest, as we did, the television series on "Freedom and the American Catholic" presented by the Catholic Hour. Because the two participants were Father Walter J. Ong, S.J., a frequent contributor to these pages, and John Cogley, formerly one of our editors and now a regular columnist, we were undoubtedly predisposed to like the program. But even after discounting a certain part of our enthusiasm on this basis, we still think the venture had great significance.

This editorial is being written immediately after the presentation of the second of the three-part series. It is too early, therefore, to tell what kind of editorial reaction will follow these programs, and far too early to know what the general reaction by the viewing public will be. But to our mind the kind of frank and unrehearsed discussion engaged in by Father Ong and Mr. Cogley on the Catholic Hour can have only good results.

Catholics in this country often complain that no one really listens to them. Very often, we think, this complaint is quite justified. Take, for instance, just one issue referred to on the Catholic Hour program—the recurring debates over allowing parochial school children to ride publicly provided school buses.

The argument that school bus rides cannot be provided as a benefit and safety measure for a Catholic taxpayer's child without violating the First Amendment strikes us as doctrinaire in the extreme. On such questions there is a considerable body of legal opinion to support the Catholic argument on Constitutional grounds. Yet many non-Catholics seem completely unaware of this fact, and there is a widespread tendency to identify one position, and one position only—that of the secular humanists—with the Constitution.

Or consider a related problem raised on the Catholic Hour. The secular humanist position on Constitutional questions not only excludes Catholic arguments on the school bus issue; it also ignores completely a different and much graver Constitutional issue. This is the problem that arises when the State enacts compulsory education laws and supports by means of a general tax schools to which a substantial portion of its citizens cannot in conscience send their children. Are these citizens, under such circumstances, being seriously penalized in their exercise of the freedom of conscience guaranteed by the First Amendment?

WHATEVER the ultimate answer to this and similar Constitutional questions, few non-Catholics seem even aware that there are legitimate arguments on both sides. On these and other issues of even greater importance, there has been a serious failure in communication between Catholics and non-Catholics.

Catholics themselves are not, of course, without blame in this matter. They were for many years a minority whose religious beliefs entailed considerable social, economic and political disabilities in this country. If that situation has changed, many Catholics still retain the characteristics of the minority group under siege, ready to take offense where none is intended and to repel attack where none is planned, but seldom ready to enter into a genuine exchange of opinion with non-Catholics.

In recent years this attitude among American Catholics has been changing, and it is essential that the process continue. Here the dialogue between Catholics themselves, like that on the Catholic Hour series, is of key importance.

It is good for non-Catholics to realize the diversity of opinion that exists among Catholics on

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countless issues. It is even more important for Catholics to get away from the idea that they must present a "united front" on the multitude of prudential questions about which Catholics are in fact quite free to disagree. Among Catholics in this country there is, we think, a growing awareness of the need to be concerned lest a false and misleading image of the Church be presented to other Americans. When issues like censorship or theater-boycotting or any one of a multitude of debatable questions arise, we are convinced that this new consciousness of the public image of the Church cannot help but elevate the level and improve the tone of discussion.

For all these reasons, then, we think the open presentation on the Catholic Hour of many of the problems raised by the subject of Freedom and the American Catholic is an event of considerable significance and promise. We think a spirit of fairness and objectivity was obvious in the conception and execution of the idea, and we hope the example will be widely followed, not only by Catholics but by Protestant and Jewish groups as well. For honest self-appraisal and self-criticism are, certainly, essential preliminaries to the kind of large public dialogue we need so badly.

STATE OF THE UNION

THIS YEAR President Eisenhower took the unprecedented step of releasing "previews" of his State of the Union message some weeks before he delivered the address to Congress. As a result of this, perhaps, the people of the United States—from the members of Congress on down—seemed to feel less excitement and eagerness over the Presidential prospectus this year than they normally do. And now that the address has been delivered, it has generated remarkably little discussion.

The President fulfilled the expectations—hopes or fears, according to one's point of view—aroused by his choice of campaign issues in last November's elections. He touched on the inevitable problems of defense, the struggle against Communism, inflation, education and civil rights, but he dealt with almost every issue, as he had promised he would, in terms of a conflict between "spenders" and "savers."

In the area of national defense, for instance, Mr. Eisenhower gave a long list of recent United States military advances, including the successful test of our Atlas intercontinental missile. He then conceded, in one sentence, "recent Soviet accomplishments," but hurried on to what he evidently considered the real problem in this area—the fact that "modern weapons are exceedingly expensive."

Similarly, speaking of the recession, the President expressed satisfaction that it was "fading into history, and this without gigantic, hastily improvised public works projects or untimely tax reductions." Concerning tax reductions, however, he hinted that tax reductions would be possible this year if his "sensible" budget were followed and "if 1960 expenditures do not exceed the levels recommended."

And after urging the need for progress in the areas of national health and education, especially education, the President added: "We do not forget, of course, that our nation's progress and fiscal integrity are interdependent and inseparable. . . . we cannot afford one cent of waste."

Other recommendations in the State of the Union message were not so much involved with budgetary considerations, and were strong and reassuring, if not very specific. The President's repudiation of the idea of "Fortress America" was unequivocal, as was the pledge to defend Berlin in accord with our obligations. His proposals for Latin American economic development and for effective legislation in the labor-management field were likewise constructive and sound. A long section of the address was devoted to problems in the achievement of full civil rights for all Americans, and Mr. Eisenhower's words on this subject were forthright and stirring. The only criticism one could make of his pledge to action in this field is that it would have been easier of accomplishment if he had made it earlier.

Nevertheless, it was the "balanced budget" which dominated the President's message. Obviously, no one is opposed to "thrift," "sensible" expenditures and the "elimination of waste." But the issue is distorted by the use of loaded words like these. When Mr. Eisenhower warned against "feverish" arms programs to meet "glibly predicted" moments of "so-called" national peril, he was not disposing of the question. There is much sober and knowledgeable testimony that the national peril, now and increasingly in the next few years, is quite real. It is not "glibly predicted." And the efforts urged to meet this peril, which the President dismissed as "feverish," may as fairly be characterized as "responsible" or even "adequate."

Aside from the persistent use of such value words, which are unfair and only becloud the issue, the President's address is, we are afraid, an uninspiring, even a frightening, performance. Our national needs cannot be adjusted to fit the requirements of a balanced budget; the budget—balanced if possible, certainly—must be adjusted to fit our

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national needs. At this moment of history, on the threshold of an unknown era as we are, and facing more critical pressures that we have ever known, the President's prescriptions—for caution and restraint—are simply not the things which are needful.

CONTROVERSY IN PENNSYLVANIA

THERE IS NOW raging in Pennsylvania a controversy concerning birth control that has some similarities to an issue on which The Commonweal recently expressed opinions. The similarities are impressive enough so that various people involved in the dispute in Pennsylvania have presumed our editorial position in the present instance. There are, however, various fundamental differences which distinguish the two disputes, differences which preclude any easy inference about The Commonweal's position on the basis of statements which have earlier appeared in this magazine.

Some months ago in New York there was a large-scale debate concerning the prescription of contraceptive devices in the city hospitals. In its issue for September 12, 1958, The Commonweal published an article which stated that the controversy involved many complex issues with profound consequences and, further, that since it turned "on the question of how various groups with strong and differing beliefs and attitudes accommodate themselves in a pluralistic society, any decision on this important issue will have significance for the entire nation."

In the context of those particular, complex issues, the article reiterated the ethical objections of Catholics to the practice of artificial birth control, objections which are based upon the Natural Law of which the Church is the guardian. But, also in the particular context of the New York controversy, it suggested that Catholics who urged legal restriction should take account of the consensus, which alone can sustain any law or directive.

These judgments the magazine would still uphold, but they cannot properly be enlisted in support of the Pennsylvania resolution, as at least one Pittsburgh paper thought. In its issue for December 24, 1958, the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette* published an editorial entitled "A Good Relief Proposal," which stated that "a majority of Pennsylvania's Board of Public Assistance has kicked up quite a ruckus by approving a resolution to permit case workers to refer relief clients to birth control information centers. A Catholic bishop and others, including Welfare Director Shapiro, have protested the resolution."

Noting that the proposal applied only where "there is need" and only in those instances where there are "no religious restrictions" against it, the editorial approved the measure. It then went on to compare it to the measures approved by the Board of Hospitals in New York and, in support of its editorial judgment, quoted what The Commonweal had printed concerning those measures.

The very title of the *Post-Gazette* editorial, however, suggests the great difference between the two resolutions. In New York the resolution is designed to allow the prescription of birth control devices where a doctor judges them desirable for therapeutic reasons and where their use does not conflict with the patient's declared beliefs. Possible abuses of conscientious objections are carefully guarded against by fairly elaborate precautions. In this instance, it is argued, the state plays a neutral role, neither advancing nor opposing the use of contraceptive measures.

In Pennsylvania, both the ends desired and the means employed are markedly different. Birth control measures are to be prescribed for people on relief not as a medical measure, but as a "relief" measure. The state is not to be neutral but to be an actual advocate for birth control measures. Not a qualified doctor operating within carefully defined limits but a case worker is to suggest this "relief measure."

It should be clear why there is strong, principled opposition to the resolution. Dr. Jesse B. Reeber, President of the State Board as well as president of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, made an excellent point when he stated: "I believe it is morally wrong to authorize case-workers to advise recipients on birth control, especially because the resolution also requires them to determine first if the recipient has any religious scruples against this practice. It is none of the case-worker's business what the religious beliefs of a relief client are. . . ." Those people, among whom we are numbered, who opposed on Constitutional grounds a question regarding religious beliefs in the Federal census should be especially impressed with this point.

Nor can one really say that opposition to the resolution is oppression of the poor. For the thing to do is to provide some relief, not to do away with the poor. It is, of course, easier to talk about the man in the moon than to pay him a visit, but this too will soon be done. In other words, the difficulty of a problem cannot determine the solution. The solution proposed by the Pennsylvania Board of Public Assistance is, on moral, political and social grounds, unwarranted and undesirable.

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CONGRESS PROS IN COMMAND

NAIVE INDEED, it seems, were all those who had warm hopes that the November elections foretold a big change in Washington at the turn of the year. The Republicans have met, the Democrats have met and Congress has met—so far to little avail. Perhaps the Republicans in the House will be more aggressive now that Halleck of Indiana has supplanted Martin of Massachusetts as Minority Leader. In the Senate, where there was a real attempt to come up with a new type of Republican leader, in the person of the widely respected John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky, the mantle unhappily fell on Everett Dirksen of Illinois.

In this first Senate contest it was the highly professional skill of Styles Bridges of New Hampshire that insiders credit with turning aside the Cooper threat. Senator Bridges apparently has every intention of continuing to pull strings as before from the dusk of the wings, making certain that his "right kind" of Republican dominates his party's contingents on important Senate committees.

The palm easily goes, nonetheless, to Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson, who manifests an unabashed self-confidence that is carrying all before it. His opening speech before his fellow-Democrats can be written off more readily than most political oratory. For, although a perfervid spokesman for change, he has executed a series of adept maneuvers that has made certain that, as far as this 86th Congress is concerned, there will be no effective civil rights legislation. To pull off this shattering defeat of a bi-partisan amendment of Senate rules and at one and the same time utter a whole series of ringing denunciations of the "static" Eisenhower Administration and glowing aspirations for the future of our country is a feat of juggling beyond many lesser men. One section of Senator Johnson's address actually said: "We must not allow ourselves to forfeit the goals of equal standards of freedom, opportunity and equality for want of boldness. We certainly must not abdicate progress to the rule of tension and strife."

A day or two after this consummate performance several newspapermen began to have second thoughts about it. The edges of their wonder over the Senator's power and parliamentary skill began to wear off. Had he actually been more clever than he thought? It occurred to them that the Majority Leader's Senate victory at the expense of civil rights could also have defeated whatever his chances for the White House were, too. That may well be. But perhaps it is worth going beyond this to a more substantial consideration, to view the "compromise" for what it was in essence: a flouting of the recently manifested popular will.

INDIA'S VILLAGES

IN A world rapidly undergoing urbanization, India stands out as an exception. Some five-sixths of its more than three hundred millions live in a myriad of small villages. It is here that is centered the problem of raising sufficient foodstuffs. For the past several years Nehru's government has been concentrating on village programs which have already reached half of the subcontinent's six hundred thousand villages. These programs are now to be stepped up. After much debate, the dominant Congress Party has decided on a series of steps that begin with village cooperatives to supply credit, seed and fertilizer. Three years later joint cultivation of the land is scheduled to take hold.

This is an answer to India's chronic lack of food. It is also a reaction to Communist China's spectacular production increases and claims. There is a certain similarity between the two systems in that in both countries cooperatives comprise a way station on the road to collective cultivation. Under the Indian system, however, there is emphasis on local autonomy and individual self-reliance. Each state is to define its own ceiling on land holdings, and the individual farmer is to retain title to his land, sharing in the community production in proportion to those holdings. The success of this vast and difficult enterprise is of moment to men and women throughout the free world.

DEVELOPMENTS IN CUBA

LAST WEEK, while we expressed satisfaction and hope at the overthrow of a brutal dictatorship in Cuba, we remarked that Fidel Castro's triumph was "not the end but the beginning of a story, a story with many painful chapters still to be written." And already the news from Cuba gives rise to some serious misgivings. Castro has proclaimed that Cuba will be governed by decree for the next eighteen months, that no election will be held in this time, that he thinks more than one political party is "unnecessary." Even more disturbing is the wave of summary trials and executions of "enemies of the state" being carried out by the rebels. We do not yet abandon hope, but the Castro regime has made an inauspicious start.

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The German Question

Western advocates of German neutralization and disengagement in Central Europe have not abandoned their efforts to alter our present policy

by DONALD BRANDON

THE SOVIET CHALLENGE to the Allied position in Berlin, and Premier Khrushchev's insistence that the West and East German governments are solely responsible for the reunification of Germany, have intensified the continuing debate within the Atlantic Community over Western policies in Germany and Europe. Although Secretary of State Dulles has obtained the support of the NATO Council of Ministers for a firm stand against the Russian proposals and threats regarding Berlin, the Western advocates of German neutralization and disengagement in Central Europe have not abandoned their efforts to alter the "policy of strength." British and continental critics of current Western policies, for instance, remain convinced that concessions must be made to the Soviet viewpoint if tensions are to be reduced in Europe.

Despite the solidarity of the NATO Council communiqué with respect to the Berlin crisis, it is likely that some Western governments will urge a more flexible approach to the larger questions of Germany and Europe if negotiations with the Russians take place in an effort to avert a showdown. While Soviet threats do not appear to have made any greater impression than similar menacing words hurled by them during the Middle and Far Eastern crises of last year, there is nevertheless a strong feeling in Britain and on the continent that the Western powers must utilize the remaining period of "grace," before the Soviets act unilaterally regarding Berlin, to offer more positive proposals than those agreed on at Paris. Many observers feel that Khrushchev's manufactured crisis and his renewed appeal to Western fears of a nuclear-armed West Germany have thus contributed to a weakening of the unity of the NATO countries with respect to the broader policies of the Atlantic Alliance in Europe.

Mr. Brandon, who teaches at the University of San Francisco, recently completed three years of government service, here and abroad.

The British government, for example, has already taken the position that, while insisting upon free elections throughout Germany as the basis for reunification, it would agree to leave Eastern Germany unoccupied by NATO forces in a united country, and would also agree to restrictions on personnel and arms in a broader area. While falling far short of the intransigent Soviet stand that German reunification must be accomplished by a "confederation" of the two Germanies, with preservation of the respective systems in each zone and the withdrawal of Bonn from NATO and of Pankow from the Warsaw Pact, the British proposal is undeniably contrary to the standard American position that a reunited Germany must have the right to join NATO without any restrictions. The British government's view stems from the general belief in that country and on the continent that the Western powers cannot expect the Soviets to withdraw from East Germany while the NATO forces advance into the vacuum.

And within West Germany the opposition parties have long been critical of Adenauer's policy of seeking German reunification through association with the West, for they also believe that the Soviets will never consent to the creation of a united Germany on present Western terms. The Social Democrats and Free Democrats are willing now as they have been in the past to accept neutralization as the price of reunification; and while they are publicly as adamant as Adenauer against recognition of the East German regime, it is firmly believed in Germany that they would be willing to deal with the puppet Ulbricht government if it were necessary either to begin reunification negotiations or to ensure access to West Berlin. It is significant that although Adenauer has been joined by the Socialists and Free Democrats in a solid front concerning the rights of the Allies in Berlin, the opposition parties refused the Chancellor's request that they also unite with the

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West German government with respect to the approach to reunification.

A MAJOR FACTOR underlying the position of the British and continental advocates of German neutralization and disengagement in Central Europe is their concern over the role of a rearmed West Germany. Most English and European observers do not share the widely-held American attitude that a "New Germany" has arisen out of the ashes of Hitler's Third Reich. Their academic and journalistic accounts of West Germany are almost uniformly skeptical concerning the stability and democratic prospects of the Federal Republic. These critical views are not the result, as is often alleged, of Europe's remaining anti-Fascist as well as anti-Communist while America has lost its concern over Fascism in obsession with Communism. The more skeptical opinion of Britons and Europeans stems from their better memories of the Nazi era and of the sufferings which they endured, and from a less favorable view of developments in West Germany.

The attitude of British and West European governments and peoples was reflected in their reluctance to agree to rearming West Germany. While America's NATO allies finally accepted the strategic necessity of increasing the strength of the Western bloc through German rearmament, the long and tortured search for a method of doing so which would eliminate danger of German misuses of her new armed forces showed the doubts of Europe, and especially, of course, of France. It was only the realization among Britons and Europeans that the threat today comes from Moscow and not from Bonn that finally permitted the working out of the Paris-Bonn accords of 1955, following the French veto of the European Defense Community the previous year. But unlike the United States, most of the other Western powers did not abandon their misgivings, and the advocates of a neutralized Germany can appeal to deeply-rooted feelings among Britons and Europeans in their efforts to disassociate that country from the Western alliance.

Informed English and continental observers point out Adenauer's authoritarianism, the materialist foundation of the Federal Republic, and the doubtfulness of any genuine commitment to democracy by the German people. Even the most sanguine of European writers, the Swiss journalist Fritz Allemann, author of *Bonn Is Not Weimar,* concedes that democracy and parliamentary government have not been accepted as positive goals, but are merely accepted as existing facts. In the opinion of many Western Europeans, constitutional democracy in Germany has failed to become a genuinely respected political way of life, and while American observers have largely ignored Adenauer's own often expressed misgivings about the future of democracy in Germany, Britons and Europeans have found in the Chancellor's statements confirmation of their own deeply rooted fears.

It is feared also that the West Germans are no more attached to the West than to democracy, a fear supported by the fact that the greatest support for George Kennan's ideas on German neutralization and disengagement came from the Federal Republic. Disenchantment with Adenauer's policy on reunification has long been evident not only within the opposition parties, but also among influential industrialists, senior civil servants and military personnel, and influential intellectuals and molders of public opinion. When the European Defense Community was defeated, enthusiasm for European unity waned in the Federal Republic and nationalism reappeared in public. Opinion polls conducted by American and German organizations have since disclosed growing majorities for a neutral and reunified Germany at the expense of ties to Western Europe and the Atlantic Community, despite the Common Market and Euratom agreements. Now as in the past, democracy and Western association seem to be threatened by the urge towards national unity.

THOSE WHO overlook the moral and political vacuum in West Germany do just as much harm as those who exaggerate neo-Nazism. Heuss and Adenauer have done their best to ensure a lasting commitment to Western ideals and institutions, but it must be conceded that the decision remains in doubt, and lies in the hands of the younger generations. Still, Heuss has rightly reminded the West that if in the first half of this century Germany has been considered the "eternal troublemaker," in earlier times the English, French and Spanish were also considered incorrigible aggressors. There is nothing inherent in the German national character which renders that people incapable of moderation, and the determined minority in West Germany which is seeking to establish firm democratic roots and permanent ties to the West needs the encouragement of the Federal Republic's allies.

Consequently, I believe, if the democratic and pro-Western groups in West Germany are to succeed, that nation's association with the West must be strengthened

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rather than severed. The Western and in particular the American policy of bringing the Federal Republic into the camp of the Atlantic Community has had three objectives: to ensure the democratization of Germany, to foster a united Western Europe, and to increase the power of NATO as a deterrent to Soviet aggression. If Germany were neutralized along the lines proposed by Kennan—or, needless to say, in accordance with the Soviet formula—all three of these aims would be defeated. Neutralization of a reunited Germany would raise the odds against democracy, destroy the hard-won achievements of European integration, and seriously impair the possibility of holding free Europe in the face of Soviet attack. British and continental fears of Germany would be realized should that country be disassociated from the West, for the nationalist and authoritarian forces whose strength is still great in the Federal Republic would, I think, be likely to assume power in a neutral and reunified Germany.

Recognition of the persistence of anti-democratic and nationalist attitudes underlies the often expressed fear that West German armed forces might one day go to the aid of their brothers in East Germany should a serious uprising occur in that satellite. So long as Adenauer remains in power there is no possibility of such intervention. The danger that such a course of action could precipitate general war or at least the devastation of Germany is also evident to even the critics of Adenauer's foreign policy, who are well aware of the fact that West Germany's power will remain infinitesimal compared with that of the Soviet Union. Should both NATO controls and the general realization in West Germany that intervention could be suicidal be deemed insufficient to forestall some future West German leader from attempting to aid rebellious East Germans, the danger could be averted by American assurance to both the Federal Republic and the Soviets that U.S. support would not be forthcoming should West Germany undertake such action.

Advocates of German neutralization have also argued that it is dangerous to equip West Germany with nuclear missiles. Not only distrust of Germany but the fear that such a step would bring about a hardening of the Soviet grip on the satellites underlies this position. However, the same deterrents to West German intervention in an East German uprising apply to reckless use of nuclear weapons by the Federal Republic's armed forces. Moreover, West Germany cannot be expected to share the obligations and dangers of NATO membership and at the same time be denied available means of defense in the front line. Given the obvious Russian determination to maintain and if possible expand her dominion on the continent, what is required is an increase in both the conventional and nuclear strength of NATO forces—including West German—if the deterrent is to be maintained.

WALTER LIPPMANN has argued that the premise of Western policy in Europe—that the power of the Atlantic Alliance would remain paramount and that of the Soviet Union would almost certainly decline—has been destroyed by Russian military and technological successes. Therefore, he suggests, recognition of the altered balance of power requires a change in Western policy if German reunification and liberation of the satellites are to be achieved. But if it is remembered that the Soviets have agreed to realistic settlements only when confronted by at least equal power, it is impossible to support the view that the Soviets will undertake serious negotiations when the advantage in the balance of power is theirs. The current Soviet position on Berlin and Germany demonstrates this most clearly, and only an all-out effort by the West to redress the balance holds any hope of one day inducing the Russians to discuss reasonable terms. It is true that the West cannot expect the Soviets to withdraw while the Atlantic powers advance through the addition of a reunited Germany to NATO. U.S. insistence on this point reflects the continuing influence of the "unconditional surrender" mentality, and is the major weakness of the current American position. Apart from that, however, the United States is right in its view that only a strengthening of NATO and of Western Europe will ever bring the Russians to negotiate a mutually advantageous and just European settlement.

It is apparent that Britons and Western Europeans have become increasingly hostile to the Eisenhower-Dulles foreign policy, and it is commonplace to speak of a continuing crisis of confidence within NATO. Nevertheless, the disengagement idea, which so many opposition parties and even government circles in Britain and on the continent espouse, is in my opinion a reflection of European weariness and materialism. The decline in America's military position is to the discredit of Eisenhower, but it in no way excuses the other Western nations' failure to make the sacrifices required to build the conventional strength of the Atlantic Alliance. One can make a serious indictment of many aspects of United States foreign policy during the last five years, but in so far as Europe is concerned the American error has been simply lack of leadership in demonstrating the need to continue on the present course. The Soviets have had numerous opportunities since the summit meeting of 1955 to negotiate an equitable European settlement, and they have not done so because they clearly do not seek such a solution on the continent.

The Russians' position regarding Berlin and German reunification indicates that their minimum objective in Europe is to win Germany as an ally or subservient neutral. To buttress their stand that Germany must be reunified on Communist terms, the Soviets have re-

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peatedly warned that a West Germany allied to NATO would suffer total annihilation in the event of a third world war. The Russians' offers and threats have had a great effect in West Germany, and prior to the current crisis only Adenauer's power blocked active efforts to explore the possibilities of negotiations, with the East Germans if necessary. The strength of nationalist sentiment and the existence of influential groups in the Federal Republic who believe that they are clever enough to outwit the Russians over the long run is sufficient to give Western governments nightmares without the West's proposing what the Soviets themselves want. There is simply no alternative to U.S. policy under existing circumstances which can hope to realize German democratization and unity and the liberation of the satellites.

IF THE WEST stands firm with regard to its rights in Berlin, it seems inevitable that the Soviets will back down as they have so often in the past in the face of Western unity and determination. Even if Khrushchev carries out his threat to turn over Russia's occupation role in Berlin to the East Germans, thereby putting the puppet Ulbricht government astride Western avenues of communication into West Berlin, there is no certainty that the West will be confronted with a blockade or other pressures to deal with the East Germans in place of the Soviets. In any event, the Western powers must not recognize the East German regime, for that would imply acceptance both of Communization in East Germany and of Russia's abandonment of its share of the responsibility for German reunification.

As for the larger problems of Europe, the idea of German neutralization and Central European disengagement is, I am convinced, not only fanciful but dangerous, for its implementation would solidify Russian control of Eastern Europe and give the Soviets a chance to extend their dominion to the Rhine. Western and in particular American policies should, of course, always be subjected to re-analysis; but the proposed alternative to the U.S. policy in Europe would play into the hands of the Communists or of the unregenerate Germans, for one of them rather than the democratic Germans would be most likely to dominate a neutralized Germany.

The way to break the stalemate in Europe is not to seek an imaginary disengagement, but to strengthen the Atlantic Community and to work out a new relationship between the West and the underdeveloped nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Should the West succeed in these efforts, the Soviet Union might one day base its foreign policy on Russia's legitimate national interests rather than on Communist imperialism, and the idea of disengagement and adjustments in Germany's NATO relationship would then become relevant. But for the foreseeable future the West must concentrate on building, not cutting, its strength, and on the creative diplomatic and economic policies which are required to overcome international Communism's efforts to undermine and conquer the free world under the guise of "peaceful coexistence."

AGEE ON FILMS

Hollywood the Monolith

by ARLENE CROCE

IN HER BIOGRAPHY of Sergei Eisenstein, Marie Seton tells how the great director once paid homage to his patron muse by improvising a slapstick allegory in which Film Art, "with breastplates made of film spools," lay imprisoned in the Citadel of Commercialism. Eisenstein himself, as Don Quixote, rallied the *avant-gardists* and rode to her defense. Unfortunately, this little film has not survived, so we will never know what ruses set Film Art free.

Those who would rescue the film today still tend to think of themselves—and to be so regarded by others—as somewhat quixotic. The difference is that our contemporary attitudes are modified by a need to celebrate the very futility of it all. The fond, roistering self-mockery of Eisenstein's 1929 charade has been delicately transmuted into a sort of Odetsian pathos. The lament of one of the guests at Eliot's "The Cocktail Party" hits off precisely the characteristic whine of wounded pride, of the ego betrayed by its commitment to an essentially unworthy métier: "And what a métier! I've tried to believe in it/So that I might believe in myself./I thought I had ideas to make a revolution/In

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the cinema, that no one could ignore—/But here I am, making a second-rate film!" So it all runs on, in a tone of aggrieved cynicism, and runs down, finally, until there remains not even the dregs of ironic feeling.

Meanwhile, when the spirit moves him, John Ford will now and then make a good film—the sort of film that will be saluted abroad as a "vindication of the Hollywood system." Meanwhile, running on schedules that bear all the earmarks of five-year plans, George Stevens will go on consolidating his position as our finest director. Meanwhile, there will be a startling film or two by a new, possibly maverick, talent, such as Stanley Kubick's *Paths of Glory*. And someone like Stanley Donen or Vincente Minnelli will make another of those stylish musicals that constitute our one enduring contribution to the advancement of film form.

For these periodic achievements we can be grateful. However, Hollywood, the monolith, remains. Attempts to reconcile our movies to the requirements of art have long been vitiated by our bitter knowledge of Hollywood as a sort of moneyed Skid Row, a place of fatal dalliance and tinsel careers, of pressure and despotism. "Every cliché about Hollywood," writes James Card, the film curator of Eastman House, "is disgustingly true." Yet it is also true that American movies persistently miss their chances for greatness in ways that cannot be completely explained away by the well-known vices of the industry.

Hollywood, is, after all, no more of a monument to national vulgarity than General Motors. Axiomatically, the quality of its products depends on the quality of the society that consumes them. Moreover, in the interplay between a society and its popular arts may be discerned the intimate iconography of a whole culture. Any initiate in the mysteries of *kitsch* can tell you what the latest Western *really* means, just as any one of about five recent best-sellers can tell you why we must have tail-fins. Our collective appetites, superstitions, neuroses, etc., are ours to explore, and the movies don't contrive them so much as concede them.

WHEN ALL this is understood—and how well we understand it, how cleverly we read the cultural riddle—there yet remains one unassignable factor: why do our movies, which can tell us so much about our corporate life, tell us so little about life itself? For the late James Agee, this was the starting point of film criticism; the failure of our cinema he saw as nothing less than a national tragedy. Set this attitude against the fun and games of what usually passes for film reviewing. His words break like thunder over a garden party.

"Few Americans," he wrote, "either behind or in front of our cameras give evidence of any recognition or respect for themselves or one another as human beings, or have any desire to be themselves or to let others be themselves. On both ends of the camera you find very few people who are not essentially, instead, just promoters, little racketeers, interested in 'the angle.' I suspect it will some day be possible to deduce out of our non-fiction films alone that the supposedly strongest nation on earth collapsed with such magical speed because so few of its members honored any others, or even themselves, as human beings."

Rude, troubling, heretically unfashionable, and so simple that we are shocked, this is licentious criticism in one exact sense of the word: without apologizing for a moment, it oversteps the limits we are accustomed to assign the reviewer of movies. In Agee's concern for America's non-fiction film, and film as a whole, is revealed his perfect horror of the smooth inhumanities of our era. He wrote, of course, as a poet, and as a poet in wartime. The bulk of his criticism, now collected under the title *Agee on Film* (McDowell, Obolensky. $6.) was published between 1941 and 1948, and no finer record exists of the shame and glory of the movies during this time of national mobilization.

Agee had an almost evangelical sense of obligation to the public, whom he sincerely believed to be "diseased chiefly with passiveness" and therefore "teachable." And his understanding of what films were and of what they could become was such that he was capable of genuine moral revulsion where others saw only the stupidities perpetrated (naturally) by an inferior medium. In Agee's view, a bad film, whether it issued from wartime perversity or peacetime flatulence, was more than a violation of the public trust; it was a criminal abuse of a noble, and ennobling, art form.

But Agee dealt neither in theoretical absolutes nor in those pious but vague affirmations of the cinema's "potential"—the handy escape clause of the cautious critic. No one else has written so eloquently and so creatively about films or with such manifest appreciation of their possible beauty. Agee's revelations are explicit and dazzling. He is able, for example, to compare *Farrébique*—most persuasively—to Mozart and Homer; yet he goes on to imagine the unique wonders it might have contained: "luminous night images . . . of the woods and the open land, deep in the darkness—or throughout one night, condensed into a minute; . . the luminousness of fallen snow in still, open woods during a cloudy night; of storming snow in the dark; of the stars. . . ." In such visualizations, as in his suggestions for remedying several score American films whose subjects he found worthy, congenial or half-way promising (his ideas for revising *The Lost Weekend* are disconcertingly concrete), one beholds the authentic gleams of a first-rate film artist.

In view of Agee's talent and patently subjective approach to his work, it is astonishing how infrequently his criticism ran to simple projections of his

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own fancies. He was the sort of critic who attacks a given work from within, revealing itself to itself.

Whatever films were about, whatever qualities of life they exposed, whether sweet or foul, he passionately wished them well. He insisted only that they be made with care, conviction and sense, and that they show some decent regard for the medium. Wherever his eye detected the slightest trace of good intentions or cinematic style, he exhumed the worthy passage and flourished it like a trophy. His minimal considerations were usually enough to let a well-meaning film by; such, however, were his tastes that *Since You Went Away* makes it, but *Wilson* doesn't. And the grounds on which he manages to put *The Best Years of Our Lives* together after having taken it violently to pieces suggest how he was able to write for both *Time* and the *Nation* without sundering himself in what he would call "a pelvis-cracking split."

If, as G. B. Shaw has remarked, "it is the capacity for making good or bad art a personal matter that makes a man a critic," surely Agee's work, in its intensity of personal feeling, is the best criticism offered to the movies in this country. But because as an observer of films he was both omnivorous and compassionate, it is hard to catch him entertaining purely temperamental prejudices about movies. Yet it is possible to infer from his published work as a poet, novelist and scenarist, as well as from the assembled evidence of his criticism, that Agee was most entranced by the large, factual simplicities of existence. In the classic terms of opposition he sided with innocence rather than sophistication, with romanticism rather than classicism, with intuition rather than intellection. His belief in "that reverence for unaltered reality which can be translated into a work only through the camera" led him to a certain distrust of artifice, and partially explains his neglect of Orson Welles and his eager promotion of John Huston; *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre,* he wrote—in *Time,* of course—"does not wear its art on its sleeve."

Agee's dismissal of Orson Welles' film style as "black chenille and rhinestones" is not wholly unjustified; yet in *Citizen Kane* today you can see nearly everything, in the way of images, sound, cutting and general kinetic dynamism, that our movies have lost and may never repossess, while *Sierra Madre* looks disappointingly tacky and studioesque. Even so, it is unmistakably a movie, which can scarcely be said for most of the films produced in the ten years since its release.

THE PURISTS who thought that film art died in the twenties with the coming of sound might have better saved their tears for the mid-fifties and the birth of CinemaScope. Today's movies show you just how dead a movie can be and still move. The wide screen has reduced editing to the most routine sort of bead-stringing, photographic composition to the masking of huge areas of irrelevant space, and it has all but paralyzed the camera. Virtually every rhetorical device known or as yet unknown to the language of film has been sacrificed, and the average movie today is about as exciting, and as articulate, as a novel written wholly in nouns.

The damage is further aggravated, in these times of dwindling grosses, by Hollywood's sudden realization of a global market. Under the peculiar impression that movies are some sort of visual Esperanto, we rush to perpetuate what has been aptly termed "the international hybrid." "The result," prattles *Life* in its recent issue on American entertainment, "has been to enrich the U. S. screen with new faces, scenes, ideas and stories." After trying to follow an Englishwoman played by a Swede in her successive involvements with a Chinese mandarin played by an Englishman and a Eurasian played by a German in an American production wherein the hills of Wales double for the terrain of North China, one wonders in what sense the U. S. screen is enriched.

The confusions of the international hybrid and the inadequacies of wide screen technique are compounded by the labors of the assiduous adaptation industry which has sprung up, in recent years, not only in Hollywood, but on Broadway and in the mills of television. The process of book-into-play-into-film (not necessarily fixed in that order) has brought about a mutual destruction of forms from which all our dramatic arts suffer. Hollywood, having lost the "over-30" audience to TV, book clubs, hi-fi and the hula hoop, now proposes to lure it back by capitalizing on the best-selling novel, the hit play, or the safe literary classic, i.e., one which has, as required reading, impressed a sufficient number of college generations and which has run through several paperback editions. Faulkner, Dostoevsky, Françoise Sagan, Tennessee Williams have all been "done"; if we had them to do over, there is little hope, under the present circumstances, that proper films could be made of them. The versions we have been given aren't films at all, but photoplays—pictures of shadows of actors who reveal only aspects of characters out of a book—and they function at just exactly as many removes from the real life of their sources as our movies are from the real life of film art.

FOR THE greatest popular art of one of the two most powerful and influential countries in the world to lose its whole formal and national identity would be a tragedy insofar as art is possible and necessary to a democracy. One singles out the movies in alarm only because it is in them that the symptoms of our severest ills are located. No other art form, for example, has been so harmed by our loss of the past. In movies

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we have made tinny myths out of the Old West and the Civil War. We are incapable of representing, with any precision or depth of feeling, the exact climate of ten or twenty, let alone fifty or a hundred, years ago. Few persons and few things in this country, whether they are buildings, kitchen chairs or movies, grow old with honor. Nothing is old; it is merely less than new and therefore unpardonable.

A French film of Marcel Aymé's story *Traversée de Paris* was seen here about a year ago. It was about black-market profiteering in occupied Paris and you could see that the women in it were wearing the short, box-shouldered dresses, the snoods and the sling-back pumps of 1944. In our films we like to cut back to 1944 or 1939 or 1925 by way of Tin Pan Alley and some perfunctory display of egregiously dated props, such as cars, hip flasks or war bonds. Everything else, from the haircuts to the gaits and vocal mannerisms, is as up-to-date, and has the same nullifying glare, as fluorescent lighting. Anything set before 1925 is vaguely "period," and a "period picture" will always tell you a great deal more about Hollywood in the year it was made than about the time it pretends to evoke.

"If an automatic movie camera could have been set up in the Roman Forum on no matter what day two thousand years ago," Agee wrote, "every foot of it would have for us a special quality of wonder." That "special quality of wonder" which Agee felt for the past was also his special insight as an artist. In that wonder, which pervades his writing and which sprang, not from a sentimental nostalgia, but from a realization of the need for coherence and a kind of racial continuity in our lives, he seems most profoundly American. "We are talking now of summer evenings in Knoxville, Tennessee in the time that I lived there so successfully disguised to myself as a child," he begins his novel, *A Death in the Family*. It is the voice of the haunted American in his eternal return to native territory. Agee's sensitive, pointillistic study of an American family in 1915 merges with that great strain of literature which is a tremendous yearning backward to the inchoate mystery of life on this continent. It is a vein of feeling that has had little representation in motion pictures but which, given any sort of courageous filmic expression, might serve to indicate the true dimensions of a national cinema.

No one who cares for the movies can read Agee today without a special feeling of poignancy. Inevitably, we wonder how much better movies might be if Agee had lived to go on writing or, possibly, directing them. "When an art is sick unto death, only men of the most murderous creative passion can hope to save it." The prospects for the emergence of such men are in some ways better, in other and more important ways worse than they were when he wrote that statement. Whether Agee was one of them we may never know. When he died, he left two scenarios, an adaptation of Malraux's *Man's Fate* and *Noa-Noa,* a biography of Gauguin, which are said to contain radical innovations in film technique. His most ambitious work for the movies is unrealized, but the legacy of his criticism grants us, perhaps, something of greater value. For it instructs us in respect—respect for the film and respect for the audience it reaches. The writhing, self-seeking "idealists" of contemporary fame cry out bitterly, with the hero of *Sunset Boulevard,* "Who needs beautiful? Who wants true?" For Agee, the answer was never in doubt: we all do.

THE FOUR FACES OF MY COUSIN

My cousin had four faces.

One was the face which grimaced
In laughter or anger—mobile to danger,
Fun, or sudden love;

Made up of flaws, joys, private
Recall; of a benediction
Or so, and sudden love;

With the harassed grain, and strains
Of wretched encounters, the thought
Of difficult heaven, and sudden love.

The second, was the blast of agony:
Contorted, it glared without sight
When the sheet was turned from the face

By familiar fingers. It glared
Without rest under the harsh gesture
Of death, and the mouth was frantic for its breath.

The third, silent, and silently watched
By the crucified man, had tiny pulses
Of light on its false tranquility—

The candle's mark. It was a good mask,
Composed to duty and not unbeautiful
Below the poised and frilly inner lid.

But the gray-white was wrong, and the faint rouge
On a dead man's lips—(and the fingers
Curled stiffly, shared the face's error.)

The fourth face of my cousin I have never
Seen. This is the secret accurate intended
Face I must wait for.

JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN.

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A report on an internationally famous experiment in adult education and social action

Antigonish Today

by MARTIN E. SCHIRBER

THE ECONOMIC disturbances which rocked the United States and Canada in the 1930's fell with magnified force upon Nova Scotia, a province thrust like a floating dock out into the Atlantic. Out of the hardships and adversity of those depressed years, however, the priests of the diocese of Antigonish in eastern Nova Scotia, with the aid of many dedicated Sisters and lay people, fashioned a program of adult education and social action which has achieved world-wide renown and has on three occasions received commendation from the Holy See.

The leadership of the Antigonish movement centers in the Extension Department of St. Francis Xavier University, conducted by the priests of the Antigonish diocese. Recently the success of the movement was highlighted by two events: the burning of the mortgage of the Arnold Cooperative Housing Corporation last May, and the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the credit union movement in Nova Scotia in June.

The first event commemorates a social invention whereby the government, a private educational institution and the people collaborated to turn idle resources into much-needed homes. In the late 1930's the mines in eastern Nova Scotia were working only two or three days a week. Under the guidance of the Extension Department, many of the workers had turned their enforced leisure to good account by joining study clubs to learn how to help themselves by joint action. Out of this study and discussion emerged a network of credit unions and cooperative stores and other self-help projects designed to make limited incomes stretch as far as possible. But once these basic organizations were off to a good start, a group of miners in the town of Reserve Mines, under the constant urging of their education-minded pastor, Father James Tompkins, looked about for more ambitious forms of self-help. Since the housing in the mining area was far from adequate, why not bring idle men and unused materials together in a home-building program?

EVEN THOUGH the miners were earning less than a thousand dollars a year at the time, several factors favored the success of their undertaking. One was the housing law of the province; a second was the habit of study developed by the Antigonish movement; and a third was the expert guidance of Miss Mary E. Arnold, who had had experience in organizing housing cooperatives in the United States.

The housing law of the province authorized the formation of corporations to build and rent houses to low-income families and the making of mortgage loans to the corporations with which to finance construction. The miners had experienced the effectiveness of the cooperative as an instrument for united action in other fields, and it seemed logical to organize a cooperative to build homes to rent to themselves.

But how were men earning less than a thousand dollars a year to raise the money for the down payment and purchase of the land? Here is where the educational ferment of eastern Nova Scotia paid off. Out of the study and discussion stirred up by the Antigonish movement came the suggestion that the association organized by the miners to build the houses should employ the miners themselves as unskilled laborers. The Housing Commission agreed to accept the value of the members' labor as equivalent to a cash payment of twenty per cent, and each member borrowed another hundred dollars from the local credit union to bring his cash and labor contribution to twenty-five per cent of the total.

With typical thoroughness, the eleven miners and their wives spent two years studying the project before lifting a spade (they dug their basements by hand—this was one activity, they said, in which they had had plenty of experience); they began with consideration of the nature and rights and duties of ownership (is it real ownership to own shares in an association which then leases a house to you and reserves the right to cancel the lease and pay you off under certain conditions?) and ended with the art of gardening and landscaping. By 1939 the eleven families had moved into their new homes and the Arnold Cooperative Housing Corporation had established a pattern for low-cost home construction which any hard-working group could follow. The soundness of the plan is indicated by the fact that last May they retired their indebtedness five years ahead of schedule.

Before the interiors of the houses were finished, two

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other groups had begun to study, and soon the veterans of the first project were spending most of their free time sharing their know-how with members of new housing projects. By 1946 so many groups were clamoring to get started that the Extension Department employed Joseph Laben, president of the first group, as full-time advisor to home-building groups, and by mid-1958 eighty-three other groups had followed the pattern set by the Tompkinsville pioneers. Over nine hundred families have now built their own homes and are paying for them at the remarkably low rate of forty-nine dollars a month, including amortization in twenty years, interest, taxes, and insurance.

THE SIGNIFICANCE of the first quarter-century of credit union activity is not merely that the movement uses the credit union to inculcate habits of systematic saving and to help low-income groups bypass the loan shark and escape the typically high rates on installment purchases. It is rather that it uses the credit union as a stepping-stone to higher achievement.

The typical promotional technique developed by the Extension Department in the 1930's was to arouse a community to action by a mass meeting conducted by a dynamic speaker such as Monsignor Moses M. Coady, now director emeritus of the department. The energies unleashed at such meetings were then channeled into study clubs. These clubs could undertake the study of any project resulting in action which would be likely to hold the people's interest. However, the leaders soon found that the credit union was the most feasible undertaking with which to begin, because a credit union is easy to organize and manage and serves as an ideal training-ground for teaching people how to handle their own affairs. Once people have a thriving credit union under way and have learned parliamentary procedure and other social skills, their appetites are whetted for more complex undertakings.

Today new credit union leaders have replaced the pioneers of the 1930's. They have, however, held to the earlier credit union ideal and indeed steadily enlarged upon it. While maintaining a rate of growth which has resulted in a doubling of the number of credit unions in the past twenty years, a tripling of membership, and a twenty-fold increase in assets, the leaders are broadening the operations of the credit union from the granting of short-term loans to a comprehensive lending service. Not only do the individual credit unions make a large volume of long-term loans, but the Nova Scotia Credit Union League receives deposits from both credit unions and other cooperatives and makes loans to member credit unions and to cooperatives of all kinds, as well as long-term mortgage loans to individuals.

Since credit unions and cooperative stores make their principal contribution in conserving or stretching the incomes earned in basic industries, the ultimate success of these institutions in eastern Nova Scotia will depend upon the prosperity of the coal and steel industry in that area. But, as the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects has pointed out, the cost of producing coal in Nova Scotia mines is so high that it has been able to compete with American coal and other fuels in central Canada only by reason of government subsidies, which have had to be increased in recent years; with the wider use of natural gas and the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, this competition will become even stiffer. A program of mechanization is now under way, and it is hoped that this will increase output per manhour and bring about a decline in costs per unit. More efficient methods, however, mean either greater output or fewer men employed in the mines. Unless markets are found for the increased output, the Royal Commission envisions the displacement of some four thousand of the present eleven thousand miners. The importance of current efforts to attract new industries to Nova Scotia is therefore evident.

IN THE EARLY DAYS of the movement, the most inspiring stories of community rehabilitation came out of the fishing villages which dot the shores of the maritime provinces. The obvious action to be taken by many fishing communities in those years was not the establishment of a cooperative store, or even of a credit union, but rather the construction of a cooperative lobster cannery or fish plant, or the development of efficient methods of transporting fresh fish and lobsters to distant markets.

Now, however, new methods of fishing, processing, and transportation are rendering these small plants obsolete. The processing of frozen fish is concentrated today in a few large cooperative plants. These in turn are supplied by large boats, which in searching for fish have substituted for old-fashioned fisherman's luck such modern equipment as radio telephones, sounding instruments, and radar. The frozen fillets processed in these plants are transported by refrigerated truck to Boston, New York, or Montreal. A similar revolution in technique has hit the lobster industry, and community leaders have had to do their best in the face of changing conditions.

Nevertheless, despite advances like these, the average return per man in the primary fishing industry in the Maritime Provinces still compares unfavorably with those in other employments, and returns are increasing only slowly. Recent studies show that the principal hope for increased productivity in the Atlantic fishery is more widespread use of large, well-equipped boats; these will permit more man-days of fishing and a larger catch per man, but will also require a transfer of workers to other industries. Preparing for this change is the educational task which now faces the agencies cooperating for the welfare of the fishermen, and ad-

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ditional loans and grants from the government will be necessary to finance the purchase and equipment of the newer types of boats upon which progress in fishing will depend.

UNLIKE THE FISHING industry, farming has shown no marked response to technological change and educational opportunities. Although the leaders of the Antigonish movement have always been sensitive to the ideals of rural life and have devoted a great deal of time and energy to promoting the movement among farm people, agriculture has nevertheless undergone a general retrogression during the past twenty years.

Total agricultural output is less than it was when the movement got under way. Not only has the number of farms declined, as in other parts of the continent (five thousand being abandoned in eastern Nova Scotia since the 1930's), but acreage in farms as well as area of improved land has fallen steadily.

Reasons for this backwardness of agriculture are not easy to find. While the resources are not ideal, they seem to respond to the management of Dutch families which have been brought in by agreement with the Netherlands. Nor is the failure due to lack of markets. Although the production of fluid milk is now sufficient to meet local demand, there is no evident reason why many of the six thousand farmers in the area could not be turning out a large proportion of the beef, pork, poultry products, and small fruits and vegetables which are now shipped in from elsewhere.

The Extension Department has made its typical response to this situation—intensive study. It appointed a full-time director of rural education in 1954 and named a committee of farmers to consult with him. After hundreds of meetings and interviews with farmers, the committee concluded that as long as facilities for assembling, storing, and processing of farm products are so inadequate, the only farmers with a future in eastern Nova Scotia are the five or six hundred fluid milk producers. However, the well-trained local leaders are planning to meet this new problem head-on. They are undertaking the construction of an integrated wholesaling and marketing organization which will provide outlets for products now grown in uneconomical amounts and which will help farmers to introduce new products suited to the area.

That this plan may be part of a general awakening on the part of farmers is suggested by the fact that the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture conducted a successful province-wide campaign to raise funds for the construction, with the aid of the federal and provincial governments, of a cooperative abattoir in Halifax, and there is a general expectation that this new enthusiasm will be manifested in a general increase in livestock production.

THE ONE COMMODITY which is never in short supply in eastern Nova Scotia is education—especially the adult variety. Although the successful development of credit unions, cooperative stores, and other cooperative enterprises now makes it impossible to follow the standard technique of studying toward some project issuing in action, as in the early days, there is always need for study in improving and expanding the operation of existing cooperative enterprises.

In the industrial area, the Extension Department maintains a full-time staff, and each fall it collaborates with local leaders in developing an adult study program for any community which will supply the students. A common type of program is a series of kitchen meetings (similar to the original study clubs) where groups of couples will gather at several homes in different parts of the community, with one local leader and one Extension worker to each group. The members of the groups then discuss the designated topic—how to promote cash trading at the co-op store, how to increase membership in the store or credit union, the integrated marketing and wholesaling program, etc.—with the Extension representative serving as source man. After a number of such meetings, the groups gather for a rally and rousing address. A variation is the short course, held several nights a week for one or more weeks. The programs of such sessions are highly flexible and may embrace topics ranging from consumer education to improvement of reading skills or use of the library.

A similar program of kitchen meetings and short courses is carried on by Extension workers among fishermen in all of the Maritime Provinces, under a grant from the federal government. Others collaborate with the government agricultural extension staff in developing educational programs among farmers.

The leaders of the Antigonish Movement have been responsible for maintaining an intensive social action program for the past quarter of a century. Nevertheless, they recognize that they still have a long way to go. This is evident from the Report of the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, which shows that per capita income in the Maritimes is far below the average for Canada as a whole.

Even in this report, however, there are two causes for encouragement. First, the per capita income of the Maritimes has been increasing at a somewhat more rapid rate than the average for Canada as a whole (and Canada itself is growing economically at a rate second only to that of the United States). Secondly, the principal reason for the poor showing of these provinces is the relatively large proportion of the population which is engaged in the low-income occupations of fishing and subsistence farming. It is precisely in these industries that the most spectacular results can be expected if the program of social action sparked by St. Francis Xavier's is continued with its present intensity.

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MATTER OF PRINCIPLES

"I DON'T trust the man of principle." I heard this quotation attributed recently to Justice Holmes. It is a shocker until the second half is given, for Holmes is said to have added: "I do however trust the man of principles."

Here, I suppose, is what is bothering most of us most of the time. Moral, social and political problems can rarely be solved by a single principle. Take for instance the problem of war. It would seem that two major principles are involved: peace and justice. If it were not for justice's making its majestic claim, pacifism would seem to be the obvious solution to the problem of war. But justice can not be ignored. And when we look a little deeper we discover that if we slight justice we are inevitably slighting peace, for the two virtues are intimately connected: peace is the work of justice.

Suppose, on the other hand, that all the emphasis is placed on justice and none on peace. Under modern conditions especially, injustices are then multiplied; war is allowed to become an end in itself.

Take now the question of freedom and security. Again, especially in this country, there is a delicate relationship. What we are trying to keep secure is our freedom. As Alexander Meikeljohn has argued, our freedom *is* our security. But Holmes' men of principle, on both sides, distort the issue by oversimplifying it. When steps are taken to protect freedom by the Supreme Court, the proponents of "security" vociferously charge the Court with near-treachery. Keeping America "safe" is the only thing that makes sense to them. On the other side, there are those whose only interest is freedom. In their preoccupation with the demands of freedom, they have been known to ignore, belittle, mock and even deny the reality of national danger.

Both of these camps in any given controversy tend to speak in simple, unequivocal terms, as men of principle. The man of principles, on the other hand, frequently has to own up to confusion, ambiguity and uncertainty. He has to ask himself again and again just how the tension between freedom and security should be resolved.

The segregation issue presents another example of what I have in mind. By one side the basic issue is clearly seen as equal treatment under law. Yet what is to be said to those who argue for state's rights and object to the imposition of a "morality" to which a vast region of the United States does not subscribe? How can claims of both camps be reconciled? The man of principle has a way out; he ignores one claim or the other. The man of principles, however, is doomed to weigh both claims. He speaks, if he speaks at all, with a certain hesitancy. His trumpet gives forth an uncertain sound.

Mr. Dulles and Mr. Acheson must know what I am talking about, for international politics is full of situations where good principles seem to be in conflict, or, if that formulation is philosophically unsatisfactory, where the all-out service of one principle would negate the service of another principle equally valid. For instance, ask yourself, should the United States have made an all-out effort in the Korean war? An all-out effort, with no weapon withheld, might have brought the complete victory which General MacArthur kept reminding us was the only proper end of war. On the other hand, it might have brought about a Russian-Chinese showdown with the United States and its allies and involved the whole world in an atomic holocaust.

Should the United States, a few years later, have acted decisively in the Hungarian revolt? Decisive military action on our part might have secured victory for the courageous revolutionaries—or it could have set off World War III and brought devastation to all.

The real problem of course is what principle can be invoked to resolve the tensions between principles. The virtue of prudence is concerned with practical choices. But by what principles is the prudent itself judged? I would like to suggest a few. It would seem that a genuinely prudent decision can not ignore any of the principles at stake in a given situation. Each principle must be weighed, the claims of each given prayerful consideration. Even among principles there must be some scale of values. At some point, one or another principle will have the crucial claim on the moral judgment being applied. It will limit what can be done in the service of some other principle.

Again, in such situations no principle can be considered merely in its naked essence. It must be seen in context and judged in the complexus of events and possible effects.

Finally, somewhere there must be a recognition that there are times in history as well as in one's personal life when tragic choices can not be avoided. A tragic choice is never humanly satisfactory. One can never be absolutely confident that one has made the correct choice. In such cases, no matter which way one acts, evil inevitably results. Still, oftentimes the only choices open to us are tragic choices. To avoid making them is to abdicate from responsibility. To sit in facile moral judgment on them once they have been made, wrapping oneself in the principles that had to be slighted when they were made, is cruelly self-righteous.

JOHN COGLEY.

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THE STAGE

THE IRISH PRESENCE

THE ABRUPT withdrawal of Sean O'Casey's "The Shadow of a Gunman"—less a consequence, I fancy, of the newspaper strike than of a stubbornly intractable production—has yet not denied the season its savor of Gaelic vehemence: at the Circle in the Square, "The Quare Fellow," Mr. Brendan Behan's celebrated foray into gallows humor, is mutinously asserting the Irish reality and presence. Such infusions of racial exoticism lend sophistication to our culture, of course, especially at this high-water mark of its banality, but often as not, all comes to grief in their dramatic rendering. No one might claim, for example, that the American theater has ever projected an adequate image of O'Casey, and certainly this ill-considered production of "The Shadow of a Gunman," with its dilatory tone and its players hastily summoned from the ranks of the Actors Studio, must seem only the latest of those enterprises, assumed with responsibility, which are always more desolate in their failure than those begun in cynicism.

Mr. Behan, on the contrary, has fared more happily: "The Quare Fellow" I take to be justly served, if not ever quite worth the serving: to that, however, shortly.

In *The Harvest of Tragedy,* his masterly study of tragic sources, Mr. T. R. Henn has drawn an interesting account of those pressures which, in the Ireland of the first quarter of this century, were uncommonly favorable to the growth of tragedy: "a high degree of patriotism and nationalist feeling . . . long memories of oppression, and the sporadic epic protests against it . . . the newly-revived Celtic legends . . . a capacity to accept the possibility of the supernatural . . . a further asset in rhythmical peasant speech, capable of both precision and of lyric flexibility . . . even the material of violent or significant action, both before and after the Easter Rising of 1916."

To such a substance, Synge and Yeats variously committed their prodigious gifts of mind and art, in one of the singular public enterprises of modern cultural artifice. It was Sean O'Casey's lesser part to give voice to the tragic ambition in terms of realistic, bourgeois drama. Out of the environment of Dublin tenements, he poured his free-wheeling scorn on the empty rhetoric of second-rate men, on the putrescent heroics of their dream, which corrupts not only self-knowledge but the very life of the women who wait about them in vigilant, mindless love. His plays are rarely complex and at no moment subtle. What they command, beyond an exuberant profligacy of effect, is passion and character ever fecund, indiscriminate even, and crystallized in a focus of national tension which defined individual spirit mercilessly, permitted no evasion or genial blur, compelled the soul to its unique resolution, finality and truth. This experience of revelation —the fundamental trajectory of all great drama—is at the finale of the major O'Casey plays an echoing and terrible thing.

Mr. Brendan Behan stands, by virtue of his antecedents, his intention, his moral commitments and his method, in the line of O'Casey succession. He commands a comparable skill in dramatic counterpoint, and builds "The Quare Fellow" about the responses of wardens, prisoners and civic officials—the hangman included—to the knowledge that a fellow among them is to be done ritually to death the next morning. When you have said this, however, you have said all, and the international clamor over "The Quare Fellow" seems to me one of the esthetic mysteries of the decade.

Apart from a certain scurrilous drollery, it is fatally uninteresting, and as a document of compassion—set against the sweetness, shy power, reticence and anguished poetry of necessity which Mr. Neil McKenzie dramatized in the O'Connor story, *Guests of the Nation*—it dwindles into a kind of garrulous morbidity. Where O'Casey moves always, however erratically, towards the pain of revelation, Mr. Behan is content to rest in an (often quite expressive) complacency.

I may say too—though I appear to be announcing this lately with a dismal frequency—that the special pleading in which "The Quare Fellow" indulges seems to me not available to dramatic treatment. Theater is only indirectly an agent of moral reform, and capital punishment, as theme, is at once too proximate and too remote to provoke us to responses other than luxurious indignation or sadistic curiosity. Mr. Behan might profitably consider his kinsman Joyce's strictures on those improper arts ("pornographical or didactic") which excite the kinetic responses of desire or loathing.

Mr. José Quintero labors eloquently at "The Quare Fellow" and his poetic method, lyricism and humility of vision devise for it often passages of resonance and blunt grief. Unfortunately, the open arena stage at Circle in the Square is hostile to the strictly realistic demands of the play's setting, and no amount of stylization can establish what is most wanting: a requisite solidity. I am inclined, moreover, to think that the burden of the Irish bourgeois repertory is less on the director than on the actor. Beyond any major body of drama one might instance, it recklessly makes the major commitment to speech (*not* language), and the

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conventions which govern the negotiation of that speech are as rigid as those of any high or intricate culture. The effect must be given of improvisation, of insouciance and temperamental prodigality, of amiable receptivity to whatever fancy, lyricism, gaff or wild lamentation may drift in on the Londonderry air. The actor, not the director, will be the instrument of this; he must control the rhetoric, impose the tone, gauge the rhythm, velocity and stress of that speech which free-floats out of a soul guileful, romantic and flattering, gay and perverse. This is the soul of which Miss Marianne Moore has written: "Denunciations do not affect / the culprit; no blows, but it / is torture not to be spoken to."

I speak, of course, largely of O'Casey, incidentally of Mr. Behan. In Synge and Yeats, a vastly finer sensibility is at work: speech and tone are elevated to a magnificent enterprise in language. Indeed, it might be instructive if we should relinquish to the Irish themselves primacy in this world of bourgeois realism—the accents of which only they can infallibly command—and turn our labors to that neglected branch of the repertory, the high poetic tragedies. These would provide further testimony to the variousness of the Irish presence, and what is more, a relief from that provincial image which no alien culture may adequately project, and with which many of us are impatient, announcing, like Miss Moore: "I am troubled. I'm dissatisfied. I'm Irish." RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

WALK, DON'T RUN

WHILE WATCHING the first half of "Some Came Running," the lengthy movie made from James Jones' 1,266-page novel, I wondered why anyone thought this was movie material. Its unpleasant story (about a belligerent, self-centered writer who returns after many years to his hometown of Parkman, Ind., to throw his weight around with various petty relatives and neighbors) moves slowly from one sordid incident to the next. Although it attempts, ostensibly, to show what small-town life is like, it seems to have no point other than to rearrange skeletons in family closets. No doubt M.G.M., which bought the Jones novel before it was published, hoped they had another "From Here to Eternity." They do not; but the film, once its clichés about drinking, gambling and extracurricular sex are disposed of, does have some characters whose development is interesting to watch.

Although Frank Sinatra is miscast in the lead role of the writer who returns to sneer at Parkman, he gives a good performance; but neither he nor Martha Hyer, as the inhibited school teacher who encourages his work, is particularly convincing. (The fault lies more in the writing than in the acting. Vincente Minnelli has directed his large cast well, but scriptwriters John Patrick and Arthur Sheekman had difficulty in condensing and purifying Jones' wordy prose.) Outstanding, however, are Shirley MacLaine as a Chicago floozy who is desperately in love with the writer and yearns for him pathetically; Dean Martin as the writer's gambler friend and partner, who is very casual about life but has sense enough to be shocked when the writer plans to marry Shirley; and Arthur Kennedy as the writer's mean, money-grabbing brother whose affair with his secretary shocks his daughter into running away from home.

Obviously "Some Came Running" does not show small-town life at its best, but the picture has its moments—in its satirical scenes or in its more tender episodes built around Shirley MacLaine's devotion to Sinatra, Sinatra's affection for his niece (Betty Lou Keim), and in the warm friendship between Sinatra and Martin. Furthermore Sol Siegel's production is very handsome indeed. The film's assets, however, do not offset its pretentious nonsense.

SINCE I am rather lukewarm about Max Shulman's college-humor type of prose, I approached "Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys" without enthusiasm but with a hope that Producer-director Leo McCarey and the good cast headed by Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward would give the whole thing some substance. Unfortunately they don't. The plot about a Connecticut town on Long Island Sound isn't particularly funny, and, although Newman and Joanne Woodward struggle valiantly with their roles, they are not well suited to Shulman's slapstick juvenilities. The scatterbrained story (in which Newman tries to keep his marriage with Joanne intact, ward off the advances of luscious Joan Collins and help the indignant citizens keep an army missile project out of their town) is made even more disconnected and disheveled by the film's inept editors who didn't piece it together very well. From time to time Leo McCarey's efforts at zany comedy provide some amusing scenes, but on the whole "Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys!" is a waste of time and talent.

For years American producers have been fascinated with the idea of making movies about Mexican national heroes, especially Pancho Villa. The latest to add his efforts to the list is Plato A. Skouras whose production is titled simply and appropriately enough "Villa!" While it is not a great film or one that is likely to send customers scurrying to the boxoffice, it does have the advantage of portraying the bandit as a complex character. He is shown as a sort of jovial Robin Hood who robs the rich to help the poor, and, himself, and

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who is also viciously cruel and immoral in his private life.

Rodolfo Hoyos plays the role with gusto and with repulsive appeal, especially in his ruthless slaughter of the hacienda owners who oppress the peons. As his second-in-command, Cesar Romero manages to get a little sensitivity into his portrait of another lawless bandit. This film is particularly concerned with an episode in which Villa rescues an American (Brian Keith) who, after joining the group of rough riders, is sent on a mission to bring back a singer (Margia Dean) whom Villa wants to add to his list of wives. As might be expected Keith and the singer fall in love. The story is not too exciting and is, at times, even naive; but the picture, with its lovely color shots of Mexican hills on a wide screen, is often good to look at. This "Villa!" will do until the next one comes along.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

BOOKS

The Mystery of the Eternal in the Temporal

THE LORD OF HISTORY. By Jean Daniélou. Translated by Nigel Abercrombie. Regnery. $5.

By BERNARD G. MURCHLAND

TO APPREHEND the present as the generative act of time in its concrete reality seems to have become the dominant pursuit of various contemporary philosophies of history, and it cannot easily be denied that a probing historical awareness is an inbred trait of present-day thinkers. This awareness manifests itself in many different ways. Essentially it appears to be a conviction that history is not only the locus of human existence but the explanation of human nature as well; history is where everything vitally human is at stake. When this is admitted the relationship between truth and history, between the real and the historical, becomes a matter of compelling depth. Ortega y Gasset has summed up the modern historical consciousness succinctly: man has no nature, he says, only a history.

The theological ramifications of such a consciousness are vast and perplexing. The reality of Revelation in time, the eternal in the temporal, constitutes a radical mystery, and in this recently translated book, subtitled "Reflections on the Inner Meaning of History," Father Daniélou attempts to outline some approaches to the mystery. Let it be said straightaway that there is much in the *Lord of History* to justify the reader's time. The method which characterizes the theology of history, Father Daniélou explains, is the use of Scriptural principles to determine historical events as continuous and progressive. Indeed, history in the Christian view is not only an economy of progress; it is the goal of progress itself. The Resurrection, which points to the Second Coming, is the constitutive event of all time. Within this framework, Father Daniélou discusses his subject at length. He reveals erudite familiarity with many historical theorists, a mastery of patristical data and his own special genius for typological exigesis.

Yet there are some unsatisfactory things about his book. In the first place, there is a regrettable lack of unity. The various chapters contribute, undoubtedly, to the general theme, but frequently the contribution is not too substantial. For instance, there is a chapter on hospitality which, while very fine, struck me as being not too organically relevant to a theology of history. Again, apologetics is consistently creeping into the work. And the final section is merely a collection of essays on the spiritual life. One of the author's best statements comes late in the book. "The essence of the Christian calling," he writes, "is this, to have seen that the moment of choice had come, that it would no longer do to settle down to a quiet life, that one had a soul to make, to meet a time of crisis, that one's whole life and personality must be directed towards the resolution of this crisis, through the Christian mission to the world." But it must be borne in mind that this is more a consequence of a theology of history than a direct statement about it.

I suspect that the basis weakness of Father Daniélou's book is a failure to establish the vital interaction between Revelation and time-processes. Any theory of history must inquire into the very being of history. It must ask about the relation of the structure and reality of history and the relation these bear to the structure and reality of human existence in the world. Ultimately, this means, it must endeavor to establish the nature and reality of time; for it is upon the relationship between time and human reality that history is based. History is nothing other than the time-determined aspect of human reality. Sacred history, too, must be understood in some sense as a part of this time dimension. A theology of history must be concerned with resolving what appears to be an antinomy between the city of God and the city of Satan, with bringing into harmony in some effective way the revealed and natural dimensions of creation.

Father Daniélou is careful to keep the two dimensions separated. We read such statements as: "While human progress itself can never be of any avail to salvation . . . ," "Earthly civilization survives under a sort of stay of execution until the end of the world . . . ," "Hence the Church and temporal society . . . are two successive periods of history, in dramatic conflict." The author also speaks of everything outside of sacred history properly so called as "the outward vesture of reality." I am very firmly convinced that the interaction of sacred and secular history is much more intimate than

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Father Daniélou is willing to admit. In fact, it may not be at all the right approach to speak of such a distinction. If history is the relation, as we have said, between time and man, and if man is of his essence a historical being, then it seems to follow that what is called sacred history must be deeply embedded in time-processes. Such a position, I think, in no way endangers the transcendent aspect of Christianity or a Christian theology of history. And it certainly enables us to take a much more positive view of the world we live in, work and suffer in, die in. Time activity will in the end, as Rilke has pointed out, "prepare us for divine circumstances."

I am much more inclined to Berdyaev's view of history in this respect. "That which takes place in man and with man in history has an immense importance for the plenitude of divine-human truth," he says. Berdyaev believes that the transcendent is to be captured (and can be most surely safeguarded) by plunging into the depth of the immanent—fearlessly, hopefully, with a sense of profound respect. Our view of the world and of Revelation, too, is in direct dependence upon the degree to which we are conscious of our creative responsibility.

And the same writer insists that the "Church is one separate phenomenon in this historical life of peoples and not the total phenomenon that the Kingdom of God must be." There is a sense in which that position must be rigorously maintained. It obviates the necessity of speaking, as Father Daniélou does, of profane history as a "subdivision" of sacred history.

A theology of history must reach that point of mystery where all such distinctions cede to a fuller unity. This seems to me a much more realistic understanding of the Incarnation. As a Christian, I believe that it is impossible to sustain a supernatural faith without an unequivocal acceptance of all that is implied in the notions of time, history and man. I am sorry that Father Daniélou has not done much in this book to strengthen that faith. I had expected he would.

Novelists of the "Second Generation"

THE PICARESQUE SAINT. By R. W. B. Lewis. Lippincott. $6.

By MICHAEL HARRINGTON

THIS IS a critical study of the "second generation" of the twentieth-century novel: of Moravia, Silone, Camus, Faulkner, Graham Greene and Malraux. It is based on the theory that these writers, as contrasted with the older experimentalists, Joyce, Proust and Mann, form something of a common tendency, that they make up an identifiable whole. In his often brilliant discussion of this thesis, Lewis approaches each of these novelists from the vantage point of his unique contribution to the unifying mood. Thus, Silone is viewed in terms of his translation of politics into charity, Greene as a theologically oriented visionary of evil, Moravia as the explorer of the sexual world, and so on.

Unfortunately, it is necessary to quarrel with Mr. Lewis on one of his basic definitions. I say unfortunately because *The Picaresque Saint* is one of the most interesting and provocative critical studies to have appeared in quite a while. Yet, this cannot change the difficulties which one has with its conception of the "second generation" as a group. For Mr. Lewis, the transition from the older modern school to these writers is "a movement from the aesthetic vision of Joyce and his fellows to the more doggedly human vision of their successors." In these terms, the novelists with whom he deals have considerably more of a political concern, or, rather, they are actually attempting to develop a new ethic in fictional form.

Such a distinction relies much too heavily upon the contrast between Joyce and a Silone or a Camus. Mann, after all, was very much of a member of the first generation, and *The Magic Mountain* contains almost all of the themes which Lewis discusses in the later writers. And Malraux, who is made almost archetypical for the "second generation" in *The Picaresque Saint,* did give up the writing of novels and turn to art criticism. In this, of course, Malraux continues the themes of his earlier work—his Goya has almost all of the qualities of the heroic Communists of *Man's Fate*—yet in a significantly different form. The matter would have been better defined, I think, had Mr. Lewis identified his group, not as a distinctly new "generation," but as the product of a different tradition than Joyce, Proust and Mann, yet as members of a community with them.

However, this criticism should not be taken as a basic indictment of the book. The theory of the "second generation," however unsatisfactory it may be, is but the barest framework for a series of essays of considerable insight, intelligence and power. Mr. Lewis' other basic theme—that a roguish and sometimes upside-down holy man, a "picaresque saint," is quite often at the center of the twentieth-century novel—is much more important to his study and much sounder. This conception is based on Silone's peasant revolutionaries, Camus' tragic and humanist heroes,

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Faulkner's symbols of doomed sanctity like Joe Christmas, Greene's whisky martyr, and so on. It is a compelling thesis and requires serious attention.

In general, Mr. Lewis accounts for the appearance of the picaresque saint in social terms. He sees his second generation as even more buffeted by the shocking transformations of the twentieth century than the older experimentalists. In this situation, they are forced away from the solid fictional world of the nineteenth century, so palpably there, and toward basic questions of value, of human dignity, of action. In the doing, they take upon themselves the function of philosophers, and even of theologians. Yet when they discover an image of sanctity, it is not serene and medieval, for that is impossible in these times; it is, rather picaresque and roguish. (Or, one might say, the embarrassing saints; for almost anyone in the twentieth century who comes face to face with the idea of holiness, as so many of these writers have done, must feel the irony, the distance, the embarrassment of his discovery.)

On the whole, this conception is a rich and well-argued one. There are, of course, details with which one would like to quarrel. In the case of Camus, for instance, Mr. Lewis does not really go into the autobiographical relationships which so often lie behind the intellectual development, the transitions which are visible in the *Combat* editorials during the Resistance. In the treatment of Faulkner, there is a tendency to simplify the irony of *A Fable*. (But Lewis at least identifies it, which is more than most reviewers did when the book first appeared.)

One of the very best things about *The Picaresque Saint* is its style and method. Lewis is a refreshingly discursive critic. He utilizes all of the excellent analytic tools of our textual scholars, yet he also, *mirable dictu* in this Time of the Academy, attempts to confront living ideas and even to relate them to the world around us. This approach, coupled with genuine literary insight and an extremely fascinating subject matter, makes *The Picaresque Saint* one of the better critical studies to have come out in recent years.

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The Buried Life

THE NARROW LYRE. By Janice Warnke. Harper. $3.95.

By JAMES FINN

THE OPENING pages of this first novel by Janice Warnke present us with one of the several problems that attend us throughout the work. For in language which already suggests that it can be limpid or strong, but which is always clear, the narrator, Robert Crossfield, explains why he is committing to paper the reflective memories which form the novel and why his writing is so crude and flat.

"Language, however I desire it," he writes, "is only a device, inseparable but a device, because beyond me, and it lies crude under my hands, even as now. I am unworthy of language, like an ardent but awkward lover. Or if I were older than I am, an old man, like my father, at the end of life, with only the past to thread again and again through the fingers, I might accept more easily my curious need to put these marks on paper, to commit to the silence of the page what language I have. If I were such an old man or that young poet. But in fact I am forty-four years old, and a lawyer, and American."

But in Europe, this American, who insists upon his ordinariness, is compelled to assert and define his person by writing of his life. And, indeed, those aspects of his person which seem most important to him, and which become most important for the reader, have become evident only in Europe. It is not that his American existence lacked event or incident. He came, Robert Crossfield III, from a middle-class, professional family, had two brothers who early drowned, a mother who thereupon gently withdrew from life and sank into death, and a lawyer father who guided him into a disinterested career as a lawyer. As a lawyer, disinterested but successful, he married Ellen, a concerned, civic-minded woman who bore him the proper number of sons, arranged parties and accepted his personal privacy—and his summer trips to Europe.

But all this seemed to him the shadow of existence, for the weight of reality hung too lightly upon him. He sensed, rather than knew, that a buried life ran deep within him. It is this life that he wished to realize, that he finally did realize when it emerged in Europe where it was called forth by direct encounter with another person, by

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love. Like many postwar Europeans Charlotte thought that the shades of life had closed upon her. The encounter between those two people—one who wished to find and the other who thought she had lost the knowledge of love—is both difficult and joyful. It is also brief, for Charlotte knows that she is not to leave her husband even though or, more precisely, because, he has been crushed by his part in the war.

Robert Crossfield commits to paper these happenings in a prose that is capable of many effects and nuances, with an intelligence that is strong and subtle, with perception and sensitivity. But even more than he realizes, he bears the marks of our time upon him. Secure in his knowledge that a man's destiny is encompassed between his birth and death he pays full tribute to the monuments of art and love. And his homage to life is contained in his last lines: "Oh life, late though it is, I go still to meet you, for I am encircled."

In his own terms, his is a full honest response to the definite, unformed challenges of life; his engagement is both serious and interesting; and his reflections and evaluations are almost continually provocative.

But there are problems which the reader cannot overlook, some more important than others. How for instance did this manuscript come to the reader? Through the good offices of Janice Warnke and Harpers, of course. But there is no artistic allowance made for the fact that Robert Crossfield designed it to be read by no other eyes than his own. And why does he insist upon saying that his language is crude and flat when it is strong, supple, evocative and controlled? Why does he say his journal has no form or shape when the form rises almost palpably before us? Why does he insist that he is ordinary when he so clearly is not? The obvious answers to these questions will not suffice. The author has chosen to create a character of intelligence, culture and sensitivity who could not be blind to these qualities in himself, or foolish enough to minimize them. The continual open denial of them merely aggravates the inconsistency.

These, however, are relatively minor objections to a work that is so obviously the result of a maturing artist who shows promise of distinction. More than most successful first novels *The Narrow Lyre* should cause the reader to anticipate the others that must surely follow.

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As Congress Opens

In recent months The Commonweal has made no secret of its belief that the United States and the free world have not been getting the leadership that is needed from Washington. This is no partisan conviction. With a few obvious and honorable exceptions we believe that this lack can be ascribed to both political parties—although the Republicans are in command of and direct American foreign policy.

Who has been doing the thinking in Washington—about today's problems and about the future? Who is judging disarmament proposals with an eye to the day when every small nation in the world may have the ability to wage H-bomb warfare? What positive steps are we taking to build strength and independence in Latin America, the Middle East, the uncommitted countries of the Afro-Asian world?

What positive steps are being taken to hold together and strengthen the Western alliance? Have we thought through what our stand on Germany will be when Chancellor Adenauer is no longer in power? or on Formosa after Chiang Kai-shek is gone? Has Washington lost its power to generate new ideas and to arouse the people to the challenge that confronts us?

That many Americans have similar questions in mind is clear from the candidates they have elected to both Houses. Can these new representatives of the will of the people make their presence effective on issues such as these? That is a question to be decided in Washington in the weeks ahead.

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